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OUTDOOR CHRISTMAS MARKET: A bright idea

Pelham arches are illuminating

MARYANNE FIRTH
Tribune Staff

PELHAM — It seems Pelham's arches were a bright idea.

Once thought to be a temporary structure for the town's annual Summerfest celebration, the arches in the heart of Fonthill have since become a staple venue for the community's festivals.

See LIGHTS page 2

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DAN DAKIN/QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

The arches in downtown Fonthill were illuminated Friday night during a Christmas market event. Hundreds of people attended the one-day festival which included musical performances, animals, vendors and a visit from Santa.

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UPFRONT

■ **PELHAM SKATEPARK:** Riehl family joins friends of boy who died in a 2012 mishap to open new facility

'The memory of Isaac will live on'

MELISSA MANGELSEN
Pelham News Staff

For Bonita Riehl, the day her son died after being struck by a car while longboarding with his friend seems like yesterday.

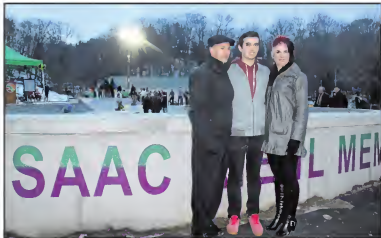
It was Isaac Riehl's passion for longboarding that inspired the community to come together and build a skatepark in his honour.

Last Monday, less than 14 months after the accident that claimed their son's life, Bonita and Ted Riehl were on hand for the Riehl Reveal of the Isaac Riehl Memorial Skatepark.

Ted Riehl called it a day full of sadness, yet so much thankfulness.

"It has been difficult to come to terms with the loss of Isaac over the past year. Isaac was a special boy who had a huge influence on everyone he met," Ted said.

"Us, as parents were denied the opportunity to see our son grow up. I can stand up



MELISSA MANGELSEN/PELHAM NEWS STAFF

Ted, Jacob and Bonita Riehl, the father, brother and mother of Isaac Riehl, stand for a photo in front of the Pelham skatepark built in memory of Isaac, who died Oct. 22, 2012, after being struck by a car while longboarding.

here today and say that I'm proud of my son Isaac and I'm proud to say that he's my

son." Bonita spoke of the memory of Isaac and the pride she

has in him and all his friends that made the skatepark a reality.

Jacob Riehl honoured his brother by playing with the E.L. Crossley band. It was his music that the Isaac Riehl Memorial Skatepark sign was revealed.

Because of Isaac, his friends, family and community, the youth in Pelham now have a safe place where they can skateboard and remember Isaac.

Ian Foo from the Aviva Community Fund, which awarded the Town of Pelham \$115,000 toward the project, spoke highly of the people who came together for the skatepark.

"This is what the Aviva Community Fund is all about. It was the dedication of the people here who made this happen. This is something that will be here for generations to come. Isaac's legacy will live on forever," said Foo.

Bonita came to know the workers at New Line Skateparks Inc. well over the past year. She has spent

every day going down to the skatepark in Marlene Stewart Street Park to watch the progress and remember her son.

"We wanted a design that embodied the spirit of Isaac. It was an honour and privilege to be a part of the community while working on this," said Bill Gurney, from New Line Skateparks.

Isaac's close friends Nick Loscavo and Reese Ashbee remembered their friend as someone who loved life.

"I ask that everyone take care of this park and honour it the way Isaac would have," said Loscavo.

Bonita said Isaac was felt at the park in spirit, smiling down on the community as dozens of his friends came out in support with their bikes, skateboards and longboards.

"The memory of Isaac will live in this park," she said.

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■ **LIGHTS**

Christmas has come to Pelham

From page 1

On Friday night, they played host to the inaugural Under the Arches Outdoor Christmas Market, which drew local artisans and food vendors, as well as a crowd of shoppers into the downtown

core.

The festivities kicked off with a lighting ceremony.

In 2012, the Town of Pelham submitted an application for funding under Niagara Region's Smarter Niagara — Public Domain Incen-

tives Program for the construction, winterization and basic lighting of the arches. This year, the town upgraded hydro service and installed new lighting to illuminate the arches.

The lights will glow red and

green throughout the holiday season, but can be changed to any number of colours for different events and causes in the future, said Mayor Dave Augustyn, who officially flipped the switch for the first time.

"We hope the community enjoys the illuminated arches during the holidays and throughout the entire year," he said.

"We want to use the arches more and more to continue bringing the community

together."

Visit www.wellandtribune.ca to view a video of the Under the Arches celebration.

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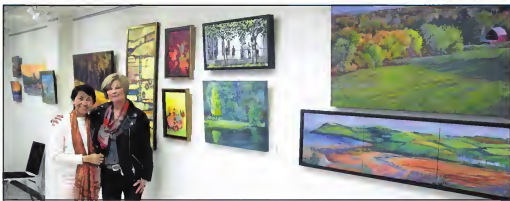




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LOCAL NEWS

■ **CULTURE:** Art Connection II this weekend at Fonthill library



Toy Chanpen Hayes and Diane Slaight have teamed up for Art Connection II, which will run to Dec. 30 in Pelham Public Library's Festival Room. A reception will be held this Saturday.

MELISSA MANGELSEN/PELHAMNEWS STAFF

The attraction of art

MELISSA MANGELSEN

PelhamNews Staff

For Diane Slaight and Toy Chanpen Hayes isn't a career or a hobby. It's something they feel they have to do.

They have come together to present Art Connection II in the Pelham Public Library's Festival Room.

Hayes, originally from Thailand, and Slaight met by chance, bonded through art and became friends.

"I saw a painting without knowing who Diane was. The painting brought so much energy to me. I loved the energy of colour. It was a coincidence that not long after that I sat next to her in an art class," said Hayes.

Though they share the same common bond that is art they have very different styles and

influences. Hayes has a strong connection with her Thai heritage and uses that influence to combine classical Thai drawing with Canadian culture.

"I love painting with the Thai theme, but I also love Canada. It's so beautiful and has so many colours during all the four seasons," said Hayes. "Living here, it's impossible to run out of things to paint."

In Slaight's paintings you can see people, activities and detail to clothing.

"I used to be in broadcast sales, so through that I learned how to take cues from people's body language," she said.

She enjoys watching people's actions, taking photographs and putting it on canvas. Her paintings go deeper than just people in a photograph.

"I use the colours to move people's eyes around the painting and each painting tells a story within it," she said.

Both artists said their styles are still evolving.

"We really haven't developed into artists who have our own unique styles. We're always growing," said Slaight. Both artists began painting at a young age.

"I loved art when I was little. I worked as a teacher in Thailand for my entire working career. I learned to love using acrylics and in 2006 I began doing more art on canvas," said Hayes.

Hayes took her passion for acrylics and incorporated it into a children's book she wrote.

Slaight has always been interested in art, but it wasn't until about 10 years ago that

she began painting seriously. "After I retired I got more heavily involved in the arts. The Pelham Art Association is great and through them and the great people I've met it has renewed my interest in painting."

The reception for the exhibition is Saturday 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. It's an opportunity for people to take a walk through and meet with Slaight and Hayes.

"The reception is always great for us. It's a way to talk to people and answer their work. As an artist it's great when people get your art," said Slaight.

Art Connection II, which is being presented by The Pelham Art Association, will be on display until Dec. 30.

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IN BRIEF

Community garden for Pelham?

Communities in Bloom, Pelham Horticultural Society and Greening Niagara presented town council with the results from a survey that was done about two months ago, asking the community if it wants to see a community garden. Though there were only 28 responses to the survey, the support for the garden was unanimous.

Jane Hankin from Greening Niagara said that popularity for community gardens grow as they are built and the planting/harvesting can begin. A community garden would cost the town about \$10,000 and some manpower to help break the ground. A central location is sought for the garden.

Lane takes his seat

Ward 1 Coun. Jim Lane took the oath of office before the regular meeting of town council, Monday. Lane was appointed councillor after the resignation of Larry Clark.

Budget not approved

The 2014 capital budget was not approved by Pelham's elected officials as had been suggested by town staff. More

information is needed from councillors before they can make a decision.

No to Integrity commissioner

Mayor Dave Augustyn and town council feel they have a solid integrity process in place.

Correspondence received from Niagara Region suggested a potential for a service sharing agreement. Council unanimously denied the motion to express an interest in principle.

Summerfest dates set

The 2014 Pelham Summerfest will take place July 17 to 20 and will promote additional shuttle bus options, including a bus from Fenwick and shuttle buses on Saturday evening.

The town will also promote active transportation and use of bike valet service.

Snow-free zone

The town made a big promise to residents — the removal of snow from all the sidewalks in Pelham. Because the plan is so large and new, the town saw some hiccups in the plan during the first snowfall of the year.

Residents were calling the town to express concerns that their sidewalk either wasn't cleared or was icy.

The town said the priority is to remove the snow, followed by either salting or sanding. Residents are asked to be patient as they go through this learning curve.

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Sarah Ferguson, reporter

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Rough ride ahead for province

Get ready for a rough ride.

Ontario has gone from a "have" to a "have-not" province. Ontarians are feeling the effects of a sloppy Liberal government that has spent billions of tax-payers dollars on flawed projects.

Local food banks are feeling the strain, and with the news that electricity in Ontario will rise 42% in the next five-years things will probably only get worse.

The bills rise, minimum wage stays the same, companies are issuing layoffs and wages are staying the same. For many it is already hard to make ends meet. After paying bills people aren't able to afford necessary items like food and clothing. What it comes down to is the government making the people pay for its mistakes.

A report by the Ontario Association of Food Banks shows a grim picture of poverty throughout the province, but in Niagara food bank representatives say the reality is even worse.

Each year 375,789 Ontarians rely on food banks each month. Food banks have a stigma of people who are unemployed, but it is "the working poor" that are having to rely on food banks to get by.

The number of people who are relying on food banks is about 15% of Ontario's population.

Another grim statistic was that a 2012 study found that there was about 40 homeless veterans

Those are 40 men and women who fought for our freedoms. They were here during the 1940s, 1950s, while the country they fought for is letting them down.

It's just a lucky guess that those sitting in Parliament haven't done a fraction of what our veterans do for us, and yet, they travel, eat and live off of the tax dollars we're paying.

And when they have billions of dollars what do they do? Find ways to gouge Ontarians to make up for their bad decisions and mistakes.

Communities are pulling together as best as they can. Pelham is an example of that bond of community. Last weekend was the Community Food Drive, which is a huge event for Pelham Cares. Though they are able to collect a lot of food during that period most of it is gone before Easter arrives and with the increased dependance on food banks, having food last until Easter is a stretch.

As an Ontarian it is sad to see what the government has done to the province, to see working-class people needing food banks and social assistance just to survive, to see people lose their jobs and to see an increasing number of people who have no choice but to call on the generosity of others.

During the recession the media was accused of sensationalizing and making it appear worse than it was. The next five years for Ontario is going to be rough, and that's not sensationalizing.

Thank your Liberal government for that.

When this Liberal government looks back on their reign of hell, I hope that they are truly embarrassed and ashamed at the poor quality leadership they dish out.

— Melissa Mangelsen

■ TOWN

Budget means more improvements in 2014

East Fonthill development moving forward

MAJOR DAVE AUGUSTYN
Special to Pelham News

Since Town Council approved our 2014 Capital Budget last week and Regional Council is set to approve our 2014 Operating, Capital, and Rate budgets this week, I wanted to inform you about some major improvements planned for Pelham next year.

"Uptown Fonthill" Reconstruction: Regional Council's 2014 Capital Budget includes \$4.0 million (including nearly \$1 million from the Town) to reconstruct Regional Road 20 from Peachtree Park to Lookout St., and to reconstruct Halst St. from Canboro Rd. to Regional Road 20. The works will include adding bike lanes, adding new sidewalks, upgrading the water-main, road reconstruction (including a turning lane to Halst Street North), and a new traffic signal. Regional staff hopes to begin work in early-spring and be done in early-September. Because of significant developments between Halst and Lookout on Hwy. 20, I refer to this area as "Uptown

Fonthill!"

Downtown Fenwick Revitalization: While Council budgeted funds to revitalize downtown Fenwick in 2013, staff ran into delays with design, with added work (storm sewer to Church St.) and with utilities. In 2014 we budgeted \$4 million to reconstruct the roads, bury the hydro lines, and make the Downtown more pedestrian friendly. The consulting engineers will meet with the public on December 19 to review the final design with the hope that work can begin in early-spring. Council directed staff to ensure as little negative impact on downtown businesses as possible.

Peace Park: Council earmarked funds to landscape and improve Peace Park so that the overwhelming success of the Fonthill Bandshe'll, the Farmer's Market, and Summerfest can grow. The plan includes tiered seating (for lawn chairs) around the Bandshe'll, fully-accessible internal pathways, enhancing the centrepiece, and opening-up the park for more multi-use activities. Council directed staff to

ensure these improvements do not interfere with the June start of the bandshe'll.

East Fonthill & Port Robinson Rd.:

As you know, the Town has been planning for growth and development in the East Fonthill area for several years. This area includes 450 acres from Regional Road 20 and south along Rice Rd. past Merritt Rd. The area could accommodate 5,000 people over the next 20-25 years and includes significant commercial/mixed use lands along Hwy. 20. Council insists on a great development that is walkable, cycleable, fully integrated to downtown Fonthill and existing neighbourhoods, and adds to our small-town feel. The Town will reconstruct Port Robinson Rd. from Station St. to Rice Rd. next summer and will begin construction services and internal roads in late-summer/early-fall.

I look forward to working together with you on these and many other improvements in 2014.

You may contact Major Dave at mayordave@pelham.ca or read past columns at www.pelhammayordave.blogspot.com.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

On behalf of Pelham DOGs, I would like to send out a heartfelt thank you to all who has helped us in our efforts for our Pelham dog park. Especially to Giant Tiger, Fonthill and The Lazy Loon Restaurant and Ice Cream Bar, who both generously hosted a fundraising event for our future dog park. We are very grateful for your support and community spirit!

We started fundraising in September and we are now just over quarter of the way to meeting our commitment of raising \$10,000. So many have helped in many ways to get to where we are – too many names to mention here. We have hopes of recognizing contributions at the future park if plans permit.

Pelham DOGs still has a long way to

go to reach our fundraising goal, so we encourage anyone interested in helping to contact us. Business and personal contributions of many kinds are helpful. We can be reached through our website, www.pelhamdogs.com or e-mail at info@pelhamdogs.com.

Thanks,
Sincerely,

PAM DEFAZZO

Pelham park a packed place



DAN DAKIN/
TRIBUNE STAFF
Garrett Quast,
of Fonthill,
rides the
newly-opened
Isaac Riehl
Memorial
Skatepark
Thursday
afternoon in
Pelham. The
park has been
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cyclists and
skateboarders
since it
opened
Monday.



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Tuesday Dec 17 9:30 am - 10:30 am

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6:00 pm - 6:30 pm (8+ yrs)

Drop in and try any session for \$4.50 or purchase your 10 + 2 bonus passes for \$40 at Pelham Town Hall. For more information on any of the Zumba classes, please contact (905) 892-2607, ext. 329.

Walking Club - Everyone is welcome! - Dec 17 and Dec 19

Interested in walking in Pelham? Interested in joining a Walking Club? Then join us! Tuesdays at Pelham Arena from 9-10 am and Thursdays at Fonthill Bandshell from 9-10:30 am. For more information, please contact (905) 892-2607 ext. 329.

Arena Programs

Public Skating	Adult Public Skating	Adult/Preschool	Men's Shiny Hockey	Women's Shiny Hockey	Women's Learn to Play Hockey
Tuesday Dec 17 7:30-9:30 pm Friday Dec 20 8:00 - 9:30 pm Sunday Dec 22 1:00-2:00 pm	Thursday Dec 19 1:00 - 2:00 pm	Tuesday Dec 17 1:00 - 2:00 pm Friday Dec 20 10:00 - 11 am	Tuesday Dec 17 8:00 - 9:00 am Friday Dec 20 9:00 - 10:00 am	Monday Dec 16 10:00 - 11:00 am Thursday Dec 19 10:30 - 11:30 am	Thursday Dec 19 9:30 - 10:30 am

"Get Active for Life" Join us at a park near you! Participation is at no charge, but we do require a registration form be submitted.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
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6:00 - 7:00 pm	Cherry Ridge Park (Walking)	Peace Park (Walking)	Pelham Arena (Walking)	Woodstream Park (Walking)	

For more information, please visit pelham.ca or contact jcook@pelham.ca or call 905-892-2607 ext. 329.

📰 COMMUNITY EVENTS & NEWS

The "New" Town of Pelham Website is almost here! Be sure to visit pelham.ca on Monday, December 16, 2013 for the official launch!

The Mayor's Gala Committee is seeking applications from local organizations serving Pelham that are interested in receiving a donation from the funds generated by the Annual Mayor's Gala. Visit www.pelham.ca for more information.

CHRISTMAS IN PELHAM! November 6, 2013 - January 5, 2014 Check out these great events around town!



December 7 - December 25 (5:30pm to 8:00pm): Christmas Light Competition - Take the Tour & cast your Ballot! Maps now available at Municipal Offices or www.pelham.ca

December 14 (1pm to 5pm): Santa Claus Parade - Fenwick

Parade starts at 1 pm. Letters for Santa will be collected along the parade route. Join Santa at Centennial Park after the parade for a visit, hot apple cider, chili, hot dogs & coffee. Enjoy a hay ride or pony ride!

December 14 (3 pm to 4 pm) & December 15 (11 am to 12 pm): "Joyland" Children's Christmas Musical, Pelham Community Church

December 20 (8:00pm to 9:30pm): Tim Horton's Holiday Free Skate - Pelham Arena, Fonthill

December 22 (1:00pm to 2:20pm): Tim Horton's Holiday Free Skate - Pelham Arena, Fonthill



LOCAL NEWS

■ **EDUCATION:** Korean War remembered at St. Ann

Students think of others

MARIA REMEER

November was the month to think of others at St. Ann.

We began by participating in Mary's Meals. Mary's Meals is a charity that creates school

feeding projects in some of the world's poorest communities where poverty and hunger prevent children from gaining an education. Participating in this charity meant that students

ate oatmeal, a common meal for students in Malawi, Africa, for their morning snack. Students were served on the floor in the gymnasium by the St. Ann School Council and were asked

to think about how they might feel if that was their only meal. The children were respectful and we all gained some perspective to how fortunate we truly are at St. Ann.

We also recognized Remembrance Day and particularly remembered those who fought and lost their lives in the Korean War. The children all wore poppies as we listened to meaningful speeches and poems, sang the national anthem and shared in two minutes of silence. A special thank you goes out to LCRD Sue Steflo, a former St. Ann Graduate, who shared her meaningful thoughts and experiences.

Our junior and intermediate classes held their annual spelling bee in the gym.

The kids worked hard and performed well with the winner competing in the Niagara Catholic District School Board Spelling Bee. Congratulations to all competitors.

The girls and boys volleyball teams were busy this month, setting bumping and volleying. They each competed at their respective tournaments and the girls moved on to compete at the school board tournament at Brock University. Thanks to the players and coaches for making us proud!

The Grade 8 students hosted Bishop Gerard Bergie at St. Ann Church and received the sacrament of Confirmation.

May God continue to bless these children.

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PHOTO SUBMITTED

Students at St. Ann School took part in St. Mary's Meals. Students were fed their morning snack of oatmeal, on the floor in the gym. For many kids in Malawi, Africa, that would be their only meal of the day. Students were given insight in how much others struggle.

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SPORTS

■ SPORTS: Panthers unstoppable

Panthers score 100th goal



PHOTO BY MIKE TAYLOR

Blake Bishop, of the Pelham Panthers, handles the puck through a crowd of Port Colborne defencemen, Nov. 30.

The Baron Roofing Pee-wee Panthers played a pair of games last weekend beginning with a home bout against Port Colborne #3.

Jared Sloan's opening goal of the game from Dan Durkin was quickly matched by Port Colborne. Drew Colangelo stickhandled his way end to end through everyone to net the Panthers' second, and again, Port responded a minute later. Sloan picked up his second goal of the game from Mitchell Karray and Forest Turpel put away a far rebound in front of the net to score the Panthers' 100th goal of the season. Eli Taylor and Durkin assisted. Port Colborne tied the game early in the third

frame before the Panthers began to put some distance between them with a power play goal from Josh Morningstar helped by Colton Morrison and a 5-hole shot from Taylor assisted by Colangelo and Morrison.

The Panthers finished off the game with three goals in the final three minutes - Tyler Scott flipped the puck over the netminder's shoulder from Colangelo, Morrison went high glove side with the help of Sloan and Jack Obdeyn. Obdeyn beat the buzzer to score from Morrison and Colangelo - to seal the 9-4 victory for goalie Carter Nicholson.

On Sunday, the team travelled to Dunnville to face Dunnville #2. Forest Tur-

pel started the scoring with a goal helped by Zach Baltrusinas and Blake Bishop. The second period opened with Taylor finding the net with the help of Bishop and ended with two Panther goals in the final minute - Sloan scored with assists from Baltrusinas and Durkin and a 5-hole shot from Colangelo helped by Taylor and Obdeyn.

Sloan took the puck for a

ride down the rink to score his second goal of the game, and Taylor and Colangelo each picked up their second goals - Taylor from Sloan and Turpel and Colangelo with a wraparound from Morrison and Obdeyn - before Taylor topped off the game with his hat trick goal: an unassisted, short-handed (5 on 3) gem.

Scott manned the pipes to earn the shutout.



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LOCAL NEWS

POLITICS

Hang up cellphones, councillor says

JEFF BOLCHOWSKI
Standard Staff

Turn off the phone already, a Niagara Falls regional councillor is exhorting her colleagues.

Niagara Falls Coun. Barb Greenwood says councillors "abuse" of their cellphones during meetings is behind a motion she'll deliver Thursday, asking councillors to ban cellphones around the table.

Councillors getting calls has become a problem this term, she

said — and taking a call means diverting one's attention from the meeting.

"You're elected to do a job. Part of that job isn't doing your second job at council because you're bored," Greenwood said.

"My tabletop vibrates every two minutes. That to me is disruptive because it irritates me to no end."

Greenwood put councillors on notice during the last council meeting that her motion would be coming.

The move comes against a backdrop of an increasingly digital council. Several councillors bring tablets and laptops to council, with a handful occasionally Tweeting from the chamber.

And it comes after comments over the summer from regional Chair Gary Burroughs, who said councillors went through a phase of messaging each other during meetings, even influencing votes.

Friday, Burroughs said that stopped when councillors were

told their texts were recoverable.

But he expressed reservations about a cellphone ban.

"The problem when you're setting a firm rule is you miss out on some of the (benefits)," Burroughs said. He said some people, like regional chief medical officer Val Jaeger, must have their phone on at all times.

Some councillors, he said, also need the phones for emergency calls.

Burroughs figured Greenwood's motion could change by the time it reaches the council floor.

Other councillors, Greenwood said, ban cellphones, including provincial parliament. "In Kingston, you hand them in at the door," she said.

"You are in a very important meeting. You can be pulled out of the meeting and someone can notify you and come and get you if there's an emergency."

Greenwood said the use of cellphones

is a generational issue. But she said the problem has become worse during this term of council.

She couldn't say if cellphone use between councillors had an impact on votes.

For Pelham Mayor Dave Augustyn, often spotted on his laptop during meetings, such technology offers communication opportunities. Augustyn said he Tweets and posts council updates to Facebook, to a positive response from constituents.

He said phones have use at council for their smartphone aspects.

"I think cellphones are so much more than phones now. They are a means of communicating," he said.

"Certainly phone calls have to be used judiciously, if there's an emergency."

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LOCAL NEWS

■ **BUYING LOCAL:** Holiday shoppers may want to spend their hard-earned dollars at home

Gift-giving made in Niagara

MARYANNE FIRTH
Tribune Staff

WELLAND — Erin Snow has always known Niagarans are crafty.

But it wasn't until she founded the online Niagara Etsy Artisans market in 2009 that her eyes were truly opened to the creative talent within the region.

When the Fenwick resident started the online networking group, through e-commerce site Etsy, she had no idea how many Niagara-made items were already out there just waiting for exposure.

"I didn't realize how many people were making handcrafted items from home," she said, "and trying to create viable businesses."

As a business owner, Snow knows how difficult it can be to spread word about locally-made items that are available. She's been running Chasing Clouds out of her home for the past 15 years, selling bath and body products, as well as essential oils for aromatherapy.

Snow hoped the online regional market would catch on, and it seems it has.

Since its inception, Niagarans have set up more than 175 online shops to sell handmade clothing, jewelry, toys, artwork, home décor items and bath and body products.

"I think people want handmade items because they're high quality and can sometimes, depending

on what they are, last for generations," Snow said.

Etsy, which focuses on handmade and vintage items, has become a great resource to find these unique gifts, she said.

"People know you put a lot of work into handmade items. These are people following their passion. There's a story behind every product."

Gail Todd, owner of Port Colborne boutique Something Else, believes there's a pride in purchasing products made within the region. Her store features "upcycled" and handmade clothing, accessories and décor created by close to 50 local artists.

"There's a significance when you buy items made here," she said, and as a bonus each purchase means money coming back into the local economy.

The holiday season is a busy time of year for local artist Marsha Cox at Forks Road Pottery in Grimsby.

"If it's a good season, about 25% of our business is in December," she said.

"We sell tons of mugs," she said, along with a variety of other handcrafted items available at the store.

Yarn bowls for knitters and pie plates have been the "hot sellers" this season, she added.

For the foodie on your shopping list, Niagara Presents, which has a shop in Beausville and recently opened a temporary storefront at Rose City Plaza in Welland, has a selection of locally-made gourmet

preserves.

The business, owned by Niagara Women's Enterprise Centre and parent non-profit organization Niagara Peninsula Homes, supports through its sales training programs and services for women in need in the community.

Along with offering their own jams, jellies and other treats, Niagara Presents also creates custom baskets filled with unique items made within the region.

Local artist Kelly Langley Davies believes a work of art can be the perfect present for the holidays.

"It's forever. It doesn't go out of style. It appreciates in value always," she said while stopping in at Something Else, where she sells her work.

"What other gift can you say, 'I'll keep that forever?'"

Purchasing the right piece of art for someone can be difficult, but when a shopper finds a piece that "speaks to them" or has a quality that reminds them of the individual they're shopping for, they'll know, Langley Davies said.

For gift-buyers looking for that one-stop shop for all things handmade, Niagara Crafters in Port Colborne fits the bill.

Featuring the work of 99 Niagara artisans, the shop sells clothing, accessories, toys, home décor, Christmas cards and decorations, candles, and glassware and woodwork, among other items.

"It's an everyday craft show," store manager Betty Molenaar

said with a smile.

"It's a place to buy something no one else has."

The volunteer-run store has expanded significantly since opening in April 2012 with only a handful of artists. It's now

open six days a week and offers, along with its regular hours, private shopping parties.

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Choirs to carol at Seaway Mall

WELLAND — Sounds of the holidays will echo through the corridors at Seaway

Mall this week. Students from Welland, Pelham, Port Colborne and Wainfleet elementary and secondary schools will lend their voices to Choir-Fest and perform at the mall from Monday to Friday.

Performances will take place each day from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the hallway between Ernie Allen Court and Winners. An additional performance will take place Friday from 2:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. Participating schools, from both the

public and Catholic boards, include Quaker Road, Pelham Centre, A.K. Wigg, Ross School, Port Colborne High School, St. Augustine, St. Therese, St. Andrews, St. Elizabeth, St. Patrick and Maple Crest Early School.

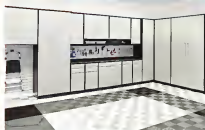
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COLON CLEANSING AND OTHER DETOX METHODS

People often come to the store looking for products that will cleanse their colon, or detoxify their system. They have heard that regular colon or liver cleansing and other methods of detoxification can rid the body of pollutants, aid in weight loss, and prevent cancer.

The theory that over time the body can accumulate harmful toxins such as metals and pesticides is often perpetuated by the media and other advertisers. Proponents believe special treatments including herbals or supplements given orally, or as enemas, or special diets, can remove these toxins from the body.

Unfortunately there is no proof to support any of these claims. There is no special product or method that can rid the body of toxins.

The body is an amazing machine equipped with liver and kidneys that are responsible for filtering and eliminating toxins from the body.

Detoxification programs can actually be dangerous. They often include laxatives that can cause significant diarrhea resulting in fluid loss, and electrolyte imbalances. Some laxatives can worsen heart failure or cause kidney failure in people who have kidney disease.

Enemas and colonics can also lead to electrolyte imbalances and can even cause a perforated rectum. Some deaths have actually been reported with the use of coffee enemas.

For patients who want to optimize their health there are some simple much safer steps that can be taken. The first step for overweight patients is to lose weight by eating more fruits and vegetables and less refined sugar. Secondly, drinking a few glasses of water can help with weight loss and general health. However, it is not necessary to over do water intake either. The body closely regulates the amount of water in your system through homeostasis and your kidneys. Drinking too much can force you to the bathroom with increased frequency and not provide you with any other additional "health" benefit. Simple exercise like walking and some daily fresh air can improve mood and aid in weight loss as well.

For patients who want to take a supplement, there are some that can improve your health. Vitamin D, and Omega 3's have shown significant health benefits. Adults should take at least 1000 IU of vitamin D a day for bone health and cancer prevention. Omega 3's (EPA and DHA) have shown benefits for heart and brain health. An aspirin a day is also promoted for heart and stroke protection. Finally naturally occurring antioxidants that come in berries, green tea, and other naturally occurring sources can help with general overall health.

If you want to improve your health, it is best to avoid colon and liver cleanses and stick to the above mentioned strategies. Speak to your family physician or pharmacist if you would like to add in a supplement, and for advice on the best way for you to "get healthy".

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■ ENERGY

'We work to pay' 'Do our wages go up with these higher bills?'

RAY SPITERI
QMI Agency Niagara

There's no shortage of reaction from Niagara residents to the reality their hydro bills are set to skyrocket big time.

Comments came flooding in to *The Tribune's* Facebook page about the Liberal government's new long-term energy plan, showing the average Ontario monthly residential bill of \$125 will rise to \$178 within five years — a 42% increase.

"Living in the Niagara region where the jobs are mainly tourist-related leaves people living off of unemployment for a few months out of the year, give us a flipping break," wrote Tammy Ransall.

Wrote Cathy Slow-Smith: "So much for giving our children a good education because most of us won't be able to afford to send them to college because we have to pay outrageous hydro bills."

And, said this entry from

Cathy and Dave Lewis: "Do our wages go up with these higher bills? Not."

Niagara Peninsula Energy president Brian Wilkie said the plan reflects the government's view of how it sees the supply mix going forward in terms of where electricity will come from.

He said going green — shifting from coal and nuclear to solar and wind — costs more money, but it's a direction in which the government wants to go.

"The price is driven by the less expensive, dirty technology to the more expensive, clean technology," said Wilkie.

"Fifty-nine per cent of every kilowatt hour that's used in the province comes from electricity generated by nuclear. That's expected to go down to 42% by 2025."

"Of course we are outraged," Rita Adams wrote on *The Tribune's* Facebook page.

"There is no such thing as

middle class anymore. Even people who work with decent-paying jobs are going to have a hard time keeping up with all the increases of hydro and water, I'm sure gas will be next."

St. Catharines resident Lorie Lampran wrote in a Facebook post that she's "so ticked off because it doesn't matter how much we conserve on anything, the rates keep going up and up."

"I'm not turning on lights anymore. I've got a senior citizen living with me and I leave

a few night lights so he can find his way to the bathroom. I even almost want to turn those off, but I can't," she told QMI Agency Niagara.

Welland's Shawn Bines wrote Ontarians should protest in "unprecedented numbers."

"We need to bring this province to a standstill in order to put a stop to this, but we must be united."

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■ CHILDREN: FACS hoping to recruit 20 new foster families



ALISON LANGLEY/QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

Bill and Andrea Durrant are foster parents in Niagara. FACS is looking to add 20 new foster families.

Foster parents needed

ALISON LANGLEY
QMI Agency Niagara

NIAGARA FALLS — A quiet day in the Durrant household is a rare occurrence.

When two of their four daughters left home, Bill and Andrea Durrant felt the house was a little too empty.

Filling that void was simple. Months before, Bill had picked up a pamphlet on becoming a foster parent.

"I happened to pick up a pamphlet one day and it sat on the table for months and months," Bill recalled.

"We figured we were still young parents when our kids started to leave so we figured we still had a big house and lots of time, so ... why not?"

Since the fall of 2009, the couple have fostered 15 children between the ages of six and 15.

"Some stay for a night or a few days, some stay for longer," Andrea said.

Today, there are four foster children, all girls, and their own two daughters at home.

"There have been a few occasions recently where I was home alone," Andrea said with a laugh. "That doesn't happen very often."

There are currently 570 children and

youth in foster care in Niagara, and 177 approved foster homes.

There is an urgent need for more foster parents.

"Despite our efforts to keep kids at home in the care of their parents, that number has been creeping up along with our overall service volumes," said Ann Godfrey, director of development for Family and Children Services.

FACS is hoping to add another 20 foster homes to its roster within the next four to six months.

"We need foster parents for kids of all ages and range of needs," Godfrey said.

"They all need a stable and secure environment, capable and caring adults to care for them until they can return home, to other family members or to a more permanent arrangement."

Godfrey is an urgent need for foster parents from various ethnic groups, cultures, religions and orientations.

For the Durrants, fostering has been both a challenging and rewarding choice.

"It's terribly hard work, but it's probably the most rewarding thing I've ever done," Bill said.

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LOCAL NEWS

■ **TRAGEDY:** Driver's parents launch charity effort to help abused women

SUBMITTED
PHOTO

Mo and Nazlin Merani pose with a photograph of their son Arif and his honours degree. Arif died in October after being struck and killed by a car.



Parents honour son by raising money for abused women house

ALLISON LANGLEY
QMI Agency Niagara

NIAGARA FALLS — Arif Merani was only two months away from earning his law degree at Carleton University when his life was cut short by tragedy.

On Oct. 15, the 22-year-old Niagara Falls native was struck and killed by a car on Highway 401.

"He was a gentle giant," said his father, Mo Merani.

"He was a kind soul. He didn't ask for much and was content with everything in his life."

Merani said his son's dream was to be a lawyer and to fight for the rights of women.

In support of Merani's goal, his family has launched a fundraiser to benefit Gillian's Place in St. Catharines.

"We want to continue his legacy," Merani said.

"He was going to specialize in aboriginal law and the justice system, and Gillian's Place serves a lot of aboriginal women, so we want to support them."

Donation boxes have been placed at the Royal Bank on Lundy's Lane, the Bank of Montreal at Niagara Square, the Royal Bank on Front St. in Thorold and First Ontario Credit Union on Albert St. in Thorold.

The donation boxes will be on display until mid-January and donations can also be made at the counter in Merani's name.



He was a kind soul. He didn't ask for much and was content with everything in his life.

Mo Merani

"This will be a lifetime project for us," his father said. "This will become a yearly event."

Merani was passionate about sports, particularly football and basketball, so the family is planning to host a fundraising basketball or golf tournament next year.

Merani was heading back to school in Ottawa on Oct. 15 after visiting family and friends in Niagara Falls when he pulled over on Highway 401 because he suspected he had a flat tire.

As he exited the driver's side door, he was struck by a passing vehicle.

"That night, he was telling me that he wanted to help women," his father said. "He was almost done school, so you would think he'd be thinking about parties or girls, but he was thinking about abused women."

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LOCAL NEWS

■ **POVERTY:** Demand for Niagara food bank aid continues to rise

A growing need for food

ALLAN BENNER
Tribune Staff

A report by the Ontario Association of Food Banks paints a grim picture of poverty throughout the province, but local food bank representatives say the reality in Niagara is even worse.

"The 2013 Hunger Report, released Monday morning, shows more than 375,789 Ontarians rely on food banks each month.

Although the report says the number of food bank uses decreased compared to last year's record of 412,886 per month, the numbers have been steadily increasing locally.

"We definitely are one of the (Ontario Association of Food Banks) members whose numbers have not gone down. They've gone up," said Port Cares executive director Lynda Reinhardt.

"Last year... we had 1,762 children, and by the end of March this year it's going to be 2,444," she said.

Betty Lou Souter, executive director of Community Care, St. Catharines and Thorold, said her agency has been seeing increases of 5% to 8% annually.

And although the Hunger Report says about a third of food bank users are children, Souter said the number of children using the food bank at Community Cares is far higher.

"Some months we're up as high as 49 or 50%," she said. "It's very disturbing."

Project SHARE in Niagara Falls set a record last week for the number of people using its food bank, said executive director Elaine Pichak.

"We had a record high 148 families for emergency food in one day," Pichak said, adding that figure is about 50 more than usual.

"We used to call it our emergency food program, now it's become our necessity food program," she said. "It's not an emergency because every single month people are having to come in."

Hope Centre executive director Mark Carl said his Welland-based food bank is seeing small increases of about 3% each year.

Many of them, he added, are "the working poor."

"They're trying to make ends meet working part time, minimum-wage jobs," and they're needing the services a little bit more."

Pelham is holding its community food drive Saturday morning, to restock shelves at Pelham Cares' food bank.



ALLAN BENNER/TRIBUNE STAFF

Melissa Kirkpatrick from Open Arms Mission stands beside the well-stocked shelves of the Welland-based organization's food bank, following the community's food drive a month ago. An increasing number of people are relying on food banks in Niagara and across Ontario.

The food won't last long.

"Most of our food comes in through the food drive in December, and then by Easter or certainly by June we're out of an awful lot of things," said Pelham Cares president Jane Glenoue.

In Welland, Open Arms Mission executive director Jerry Vanderdoek said the community is continuing to struggle with job losses, leading to higher levels of food bank usage compared to other parts of the province.

"Every month we have a number of brand new clients. There are new needs, new situations and new people moving into the area," Vanderdoek said. "What happens after that when you haven't been able to find work? It's just a given that we're going to face harder times than some other areas."

The cost of housing is another significant problem in Niagara.

Although the report says food bank clients on average spend about 71% of their income on housing, Souter said that number is higher among her clients.

"When people are spending 75% of their income just to pay their rent, she said there isn't much left over to buy groceries — and that doesn't include paying utility bills.

"We have a lot of people who are working but don't have enough income to sustain their expenses," Souter said.

Carl said the increasing cost of utility bills is "putting a real squeeze on people" who often choose whether to pay their bills or buy food.

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PELHAM DATEBOOK

DECEMBER 14 SANTA CLAUS PARADE

Pelham's 16th annual Santa Claus Parade. Join Santa after the parade at Centennial Park for a visit. Free hot apple cider, chili, hotdogs and coffee.

MODEL RAILROAD OPEN HOUSE

During the Pelham Santa Claus Parade, from noon until 3:30 p.m. 1141 Maple St. Fenwick.

I'LL BE HOME FOR CHRISTMAS

The Niagara Spay Neuter Assistance Program will be holding an adoption event with lots of kittens and cats. Cost is \$50 and all cats and kittens are fixed, vaccinated, chipped. Dec. 14 and 15 at Fonthill Pet Valley, Hwy. 20 and Pelham Rd. From 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

DECEMBER 15 BENEFIT CONCERT FOR PELHAM CARES

at Fonthill United Church. Light classical music presented by

the Peninsula Orchestra, 4 p.m. Conducted by George Cleland from Fonthill. Admission to the concert is free but donations for Pelham Cares will be welcomed at the door. Following the concert, the church will be offering a takeout turkey dinner for \$10. Seating available. Proceeds from the dinner to Pelham Cares. Fonthill United Church is located at 42 Churchill St. in Fonthill.

DECEMBER 16 HEARING CLINIC

Connect Hearing will be at Pelham Library for free hearing screenings and answering any questions, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Schedule your appointment by calling 905-892-6068.

NORDIC WALKING WITH SANTA

From 10 to 11 a.m. at Peace Park in Fonthill.

DECEMBER 17 SENIORS' DINNER

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Dinner at the Old Pelham Town Hall located at 591 Canboro Rd., Ridgeville. From 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

NIGHT OF MAGIC

Children of all ages are invited to this magic show put on by Niagara Les Wismar Ring 254 and Pelham Public Library. Tues., Dec. 17 at 6:30. Pelham Library. Please bring non-perishable food donation for Pelham Cares.

DECEMBER 26 BLOOD DONOR CLINIC

Blood donor clinic at Riverstone Event Centre.

The Riverstone Event Centre hosts the clinic on the last Thursday of the month, every second month. Donate blood from 1:30 to 7:30 p.m.

JANUARY 7 IS IT DEMENTIA?

As we age, changes to our memory can occur that leave us wondering, "Is it Dementia?" This session will highlight the difference between changes in our brain function that can be expected as we age vs. the early signs of dementia. We will also explore the topic of maintaining brain health and

strategies to actively protect and maintain our brain function. Presented by the Alzheimer Society, Tues., Jan. 7 from 6-8. Free but please register ahead.

JANUARY 13 LEARN THE SECRET LANGUAGE OF CATS

What do cats want us to know? Dr. Carol Teed, D.V.M., describes what can be learned from understanding the mind of this mysterious creature. With humour, candor and intelligence, she not only provides insight into modern day feline health and welfare issues, but describes how the experiences of a cat are mirrored in our own lives. Dr. Carol Teed graduated from the Atlantic Veterinary College in 1990. She spent most of her twenty-three year career as a veterinarian working in a feline specialty practice where she became fluent in the mysterious language of cats. Mon., Jan. 13 at 7 p.m. \$3.00. Please register ahead. Books for sale and signing. Pelham Public

Library

ONGOING SATURDAY ART CAMP

Call all kids ages four to 12. In the Orchard Programming for the Arts will be holding Saturday Art Camps at the Pelham Arena from 9 a.m. to noon. Explore pop art, fashion, bling, sculpting, painting winter scenes, and designing 3D gingerbread houses this season. Spaces still available. Walk-in registration available or by calling 905-892-1709. \$30 per class.

FAMILY YOGA

Nov. 30, The Village Yogi holds a special class once a month, on a Saturday afternoon from 1-2 at The Village Yogi, downtown Fonthill. This class is open to anyone and is also suitable for children and is also child, additional kids are \$4. Pre-registration is required and can be done at www.TheVillageYogi.com

Continued on page 20

Dr. Kimberly Dobson

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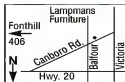
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PELHAM DATEBOOK

From page B8 KNIT WITS

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PASTA NIGHT

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of every month from 4 to 7 p.m. at St. Alexander Church in Fonthill. \$10 adults, \$5 children ages four to 12 and three and under is free. All you can eat. \$9 for take-out. Penne, meatballs, sausage, bean medallies, garlic bread, salad, desserts, coffee and tea.

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Lane takes his spot at council



MELISSA MARDELSEN/PelhamNews Staff

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LOCAL NEWS

SEARCH ENGINE

School bus strobe lights improve visibility

Q: Sometimes you see school buses with a white flashing strobe light on the roof. Do they have any significant importance or are they just a general "in use" warning?

A: The lights are meant to make the big yellow buses more visible, but are not standard equipment in Ontario.

Lori Powell, executive director of Niagara Student Transportation Services, said roof lights are meant to improve the visibility of a bus in fog or in areas with hills or woods.

She said every school year, a bus is paired up with a driver and route. If organizers know a bus will be travelling through a hilly or woody area, they may choose a bus with roof lights for that route. "We may see it as a helpful tool," she said.

Niagara Student Transportation Services, which is a consortium between the District School Board of Niagara and the Niagara Catholic District School Board, is responsible for the transportation of 32,000 students daily through contracted school bus and taxi services.

Some Canadian provinces and U.S. states require the roof lights, but Ontario is not one of them.

In Alberta, a law kicked into effect in September 2010 requiring strobe lamps on school buses after a provincial safety review. The review was called after two students were killed in separate school bus crashes, one of which happened when a bus was rear-ended in heavy fog. The law requires bus drivers to activate the lights in "adverse atmospheric and visibility conditions" like fog, blizzards and smoke.



STUART DRYDEN/QMI AGENCY

A strobe light can be seen on the roof of a school bus third in from the right at Southland Transportation in SE Calgary, Alta.

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation said roof-mounted strobe lamps on school buses are not required, nor are they prohibited, by the Ontario Highway Traffic Act.

Ministry spokesman Bob Nichols said the lamps are voluntarily installed by the bus operator. The lights must comply with

national school bus equipment standards, but there are no rules in Ontario about how or when they are to be used by the driver.

Q: Is part of the Welland Canal Parkway being shut down again this winter for canal work? If so, when?

A: Parts of the road will be closed to traffic for the next four winters as the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corp. undertakes massive improvements to tie-up walls.

Last year, work was done on the tie-up wall below Lock 2. This winter the tie-up wall above Lock 2 will be rehabilitated and reconstructed.

Operational services manager Alvin Ghirardi said that work will lead to a road closure between Eastchester Ave. and Cushman Rd., just south of Canton St., starting Jan. 1, when the navigation season ends.

The company will work full day until March 18, when the parkway will be opened again.

The activity is part of a \$100-million improvement project.

Ghirardi said next year, the

Lock 1 upper wall will be fixed and the following year, the Lock 3 upper wall will be under construction. In the final year, workers will tackle the Lock 3 lower wall.

The tie-up wall work is not expected to impact traffic that comes across the bridges.

Reader to Reader

(Re: New bird chirp might be a bright idea, Nov. 23) "The vineyards in Italy plant cherry trees along the perimeter of the grapes....and leave them. Birds will always prefer cherries and the grapes are untouched! I witnessed this at the famed Antinori winery in Italy. So simple and very effective. You could make a lot of people happy spreading the word. Bangers are so disruptive to everyone."



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Obituaries

BRUESKE, Dierk - of Nestleton, formerly of Fenwick, passed away suddenly on Thursday, November 28, 2013, at age 49. Dierk was born in Bevensen, West Germany on March 31, 1964 and shortly afterward immigrated to Canada with his family. Dierk leaves behind his children William and Emily and their mother Christine (and the Luchstyn family), Loved son of Astrid and the late Reinhard. Dear brother of Michael, Karsten and Guldo. Dierk was employed by OPG. Dierk was passionate about hunting, fishing, trapping and making sausage. The family of Dierk Brueske will receive friends at the **WAGG FUNERAL HOME "McDermott-Panabaker Chapel"** 216 Queen Street in Port Perry (905-885-2171) on Friday, December 6th from 7 - 9 p.m. A Service to celebrate his life will be held in the Chapel on Saturday, December 7th at 1 p.m. If desired, memorial donations may be made by cheque to the charity of your choice. Memories, photos and condolences may be shared at www.waggfuneralhome.com

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This coming from a customer who had tried every other natural remedy under the sun in the past few years to take away her pain. Ian, the owner of The Healthy Cupboard couldn't believe his ears. He had finally found the perfect product to stop his customer's miseries. This is what every owner of a health food store dreams about, a natural product that receives so many outstanding testimonials on such a wide variety of health issues. "I had recommended a new product called LeafSource, which we recently started carrying. We have had tremendous success with this product, and almost everyone we have recommended it to over the last few months has come back and thanked us over and over again," said Ian. Before trying LeafSource, the woman had complained about her ongoing joint pain and was at her wit's end. Although she had experienced some relief through the numerous natural remedies she had tried over the years, the pain would never fully go away. "She returned to my store, in tears, less than one week after buying LeafSource. I didn't know what to make of this woman standing in front of me crying, until she told me that within a few days of taking LeafSource her pain started to disappear and within a week it was completely gone - as if it was never there," Ian goes on, "This coming from a woman whose painful joints and ongoing sciatica were so bad just one week earlier, that the pain was unbearable but now has completely subsided." By now you are probably

wondering what is LeafSource and why is it so effective? LeafSource is a 100% natural product derived from a proprietary organic mineral composite with over ten years of university research. LeafSource helps regulate the inflammatory process and the body's ability to repair itself. The vast majority (70-80%) of the population over the age of 50 have joint problems — often called osteoarthritis. This is due to the natural (or unnatural) wear and tear on joint tissue that develops through the aging process. With joint inflammation, movement is limited and pain can be constant. LeafSource seems to have the ability to help people get their mobility and zest for life back. Millions of people seek treatment for their joint and inflammation problems by resorting to expensive, toxic prescription drugs (i.e., NSAIDs) with multiple side effects. These range from nausea and vomiting to serious intestinal disorders (bleeding, gas, pain) and even kidney and liver failure. Isn't that too large a price to pay for a little pain relief? LeafSource is a safe alternative to these destructive anti-inflammatory drugs that cause more problems than they solve. There are absolutely no side effects and it doesn't interfere with any other medications. Controlled experiments and observations have revealed that LeafSource is a potent anti-inflammatory that has been shown to bring a reduction to inflammation and pain within a few days. People notice great results in terms of more

energy and less pain by taking anywhere from 2 to 6 capsules/day. Typical maintenance is usually 1 capsule twice daily. This product gets results! LeafSource is scientifically validated through more than 10 years of research at 4 universities, including the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Mercer University. Aside from its incredible anti-inflammatory and pain reducing ability, it has also been shown to improve the performance of your daily nutrition and vitamin programs. It helps increase the absorption of vital nutrients, which in turn helps these nutrients work better. Better absorption = better results! It's almost as if they have become supercharged! LeafSource has also been shown to help enhance energy levels, improve intestinal health, strengthen hair, skin and nails and improve immune function. To see someone go from being in pain to a new lease on life within a week is truly incredible. Imagine being able to move freely without pain. Who wouldn't want to get out of bed in the morning with more energy? It's amazing how much of this stuff we take for granted, until it's gone! Ian adds, "I often recommend that LeafSource be taken with other natural joint products in order to help them work better and provide even faster relief. One of the things I hear most often from people who have tried LeafSource is they just plain feel better, have more energy and less pain. We're so confident, we guarantee LeafSource 100%! That

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